

CHAPTER 2

Mission Essential Task List (METL) Development

Do essential things first. There is not enough time for the commander to do everything. Each commander will have to determine wisely what is essential, and assign responsibilities for accomplishment. He should spend the remaining time on near essentials. This is especially true of training. Nonessentials should not take up time required for essentials.

General Bruce C. Clarke

METL Development Process

Battle-focused training programs are based on wartime requirements. Army organizations cannot achieve and sustain proficiency on every possible training task. Therefore, commanders must selectively

identify the tasks that are essential to accomplishing the organization's wartime mission. Figure 2-1 depicts the process that leaders use to identify and select mission essential tasks.

METL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

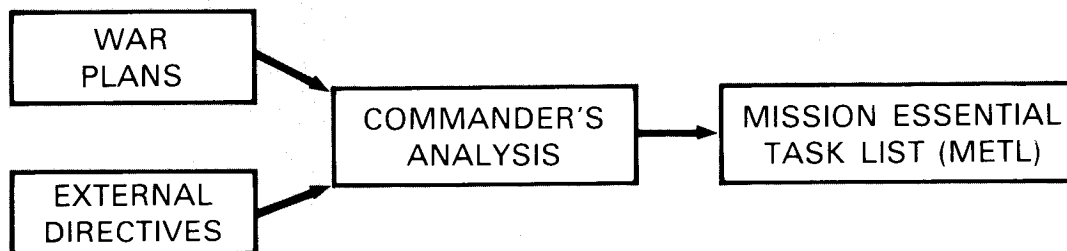


Figure 2-1.

INPUTS TO METL DEVELOPMENT

There are two primary inputs to METL development: war plans and external directives.

War Plans. The most critical inputs to METL development are the organization's wartime operations and contingency plans. The missions and related information provided in these plans are key to determining essential training tasks.

External Directives. External directives are additional sources of training tasks that relate to an organization's wartime mission. Some examples are—

- Mission training plans.
- Mobilization plans.
- Installation wartime transition and deployment plans.
- Force integration plans.

In some cases, these directives identify component tasks which make up the wartime mission (for example, MTPs). In others, they specify additional tasks that relate to

the wartime mission (for example, mobilization plans). Figure 2-2 is an example of division tasks derived from applicable external directives.

EXAMPLE OF DIVISION TASKS DERIVED FROM EXTERNAL DIRECTIVES

Deploy the Division

- Draw and upload basic/operational loads
- Conduct administrative/logistic preparation for overseas movement
- Deploy advance parties or LNOs
- Move by road or rail to APOE or SPOE
- Upload equipment at APOE or SPOE
- Move from APOD or SPOD to POMCUS site
- Draw POMCUS equipment and supplies
- Move to assembly area and assemble the force
- Establish theater or corps C³I and support relationships

Conduct Combat Operations

- Conduct movement to contact
- Conduct hasty attack
- Conduct deliberate attack
- Conduct exploitation
- Conduct pursuit
- Conduct river crossing operations
- Conduct area defense
- Conduct mobile defense
- Conduct covering force operations
- Conduct relief in place
- Conduct passage of lines
- Conduct delay
- Conduct withdrawal
- Conduct retirement
- Integrate USAF and Army aviation into ground maneuver scheme
- Protect the rear area
- Conduct deep operations
- Conduct reconnaissance, counterreconnaissance, and security operations
- Acquire targets throughout the depth of the battlefield

Figure 2-2.

Sustain Combat Operations

- Rearm and fix forward, and refuel while on the move
- Exploit host nation support
- Conduct replacement operations
- Medically conserve the fighting strength
- Provide air/surface transportation support
- Manage real estate
- Recover and evacuate damaged equipment
- Conduct limited reconstitution operations
- Regulate air and surface movement
- Conduct graves registration operation

Figure 2-2 (cont).

COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS

Commanders analyze the applicable tasks contained in external directives and select for training only those tasks essential to accomplish their organization's wartime mission. This selection process reduces the number of tasks the organization must train. The compilation of tasks critical for wartime mission accomplishment is the organization's METL.

To illustrate the METL development process, the following division wartime mission statement forms the start point for determining the most important training tasks:

At C-day, H-hour, Division deploys by air and sea, occupies assigned assembly

areas and organizes for combat; on order, conducts counterattacks, prepares to establish blocking positions, or prepares to assume the sector of another division in the assigned Corps area.

To provide battle focus on the most important wartime requirements, the commander identifies specified and implied mission essential tasks from the larger number of possible training tasks contained in appropriate external directives. This process will concentrate the organization's peacetime training efforts on the most important collective training tasks required to accomplish the wartime mission. An example division METL is at Figure 2-3.

EXAMPLE DIVISION MISSION ESSENTIAL TASK LIST (METL)

- Move by road/rail to APOE/SPOE
- Draw POMCUS equipment and supplies
- Move to assembly area and assemble the force
- Deploy to combat area of operations
- Conduct hasty attack
- Conduct mobile defense
- Conduct river crossing operations
- Protect the rear area
- Rearm and fix forward, and refuel while on the move

Figure 2-3.

MISSION ESSENTIAL TASK LIST

The following fundamentals apply to METL development:

- The METL is derived from the organization's wartime missions and related tasks in external directives.
- Mission essential tasks must apply to the entire organization. METL does not include tasks assigned solely to subordinate organizations.
- Each organization's METL must support and complement higher headquarters' METL.
- The availability of resources does not affect METL development. The METL is an unconstrained statement of the tasks required to accomplish wartime missions.
- The seven battlefield operating systems (BOS) are used to systematically ensure that all elements of the organization's combat power are directed toward accomplishing the overall mission. BOS are the major functions which occur on the battlefield and must be performed by the force to successfully execute operations. The systems are as follows:
 - Maneuver.
 - Fire support.
 - Command and control.
 - Intelligence.
 - Mobility/survivability.
 - Combat service support.
 - Air defense.

In similar type organizations, mission essential tasks may vary significantly because of different wartime missions or geographical locations. For example, a CONUS-based division may identify strategic deployment requirements as critical deployment tasks; a forward-deployed division may identify tactical deployment requirements such as rapid assembly and tactical road marches as critical deployment tasks. Geography may also influence the selection of different mission essential tasks for units with wartime missions in tropical, cold, or desert environments.

For organizations with very specific wartime missions (for example, forward deployed units), battle books can also assist in the identification of mission essential tasks. Battle books contain detailed information concerning war plans, such as tactical routes to wartime areas of operation, ammunition upload procedures, execution of schemes of maneuver, and other support requirements. Preparation of battle books is particularly important at battalion level and below to develop the precise tasks required for mission accomplishment.

All AC and RC MTOE and TDA organizations from corps to company level prepare METLs. Command groups and staff elements at each level (Figure 2-4) develop METLs to address mission essential tasks in their areas of responsibility. Each organization's METL is approved by the next higher commander in the wartime chain of command. Command group METLs are approved by the commander. Staff METLs are approved by the organization's commander or chief of staff.

Organizations that conduct daily support functions also prepare a METL. The METL for these support organizations must address the differences between peacetime and wartime operating conditions. For example, a combat service support unit may operate during peacetime from permanent facilities, with some major supplies provided via contract transportation and automation systems operated using commercial telephone systems. A wartime environment, however, requires support missions to be accomplished under austere conditions on an active battlefield. Support organizations' METLs must identify these wartime requirements and include them in subsequent training plans.

The METLs for associated combat, combat support, and combat service support organizations must be coordinated during the development process. This requirement supports the concept that combined arms and services teams will conduct training and warfighting. A key component of the senior commander's METL approval process is determining if subordinate organizations have properly coordinated their METLs.

EXAMPLE DIVISION G3 CURRENT OPERATIONS AND PLANS STAFF METL

ELEMENT/CELL/SECTION	STAFF MISSION ESSENTIAL TASK
G3/Current Operations	Synchronize Tactical Operations
G3/Current Operations	Review Plans/Orders of Subordinate Units
G3/Current Operations	Organize and Displace the Tactical Command Post
G3/Current Operations	Incorporate Reconstitution Operations in Tactical Concepts
G3/Current Operations	Prepare/Maintain Command SOP
G3/Current Operations	Displace the Command Post
G3/Current Operations/Plans	Incorporate Rear Operations and Planning
G3/Plans	Forecast Probable Requirements
G3/Plans	Conduct Mission Analysis
G3/Plans	Prepare the Operations Estimate
G3/Plans	Implement Commander's Decision
G3/Plans	Develop the Division Operation Order/Plan (OPORD/OPLAN)
G3/Plans	Plan For Future or Follow-on Operations
G3/Plans	Prepare Fragmentary Orders (FRAGOs)

Figure 2-4.

Since the METL forms the basis for the organization's training plans, it is stabilized when approved. The METL is normally modified only if changes occur in wartime missions. Because war plans are the most critical input to the METL development process, senior commanders make every effort to stabilize wartime missions. A significant revision of a unit's mission can result in major changes to its METL and require subsequent major modifications to training plans.

The commander has the responsibility for developing a training strategy that will maintain unit proficiency for all tasks that have been designated as mission essential. There should be no attempt to prioritize tasks within the METL. By definition all tasks that have been placed on the METL are equally essential to ensure mission accomplishment.

Commanders involve subordinate commanders and their CSMs in METL develop-

ment to create a team approach to battle-focused training. Subordinate participation develops a common understanding of the organization's critical wartime requirements so that METLs throughout the organization are mutually supporting. Subordinate commanders can subsequently apply insights gained during preparation of the next higher headquarters' METL to the development of their own METL. The CSM and other key NCOs must understand the organization's collective METL so that they can integrate individual tasks into each collective mission essential task during METL-based training.

After the commander designates the collective mission essential tasks required to accomplish his organization's wartime mission, the CSM and senior NCOs develop a supporting individual task list for each mission essential task. Soldier training publications and mission training plans are major source documents for selecting appropriate individual tasks.

RC and TDA METL Development

RC METL DEVELOPMENT

The METL development process is the same for Active and Reserve Component

organizations. All training (less necessary state-required training for the Army National Guard) must be directed at wartime

mission readiness. RC units have less than 20 percent of the training time available to their AC counterparts. Therefore, battle focus is essential so that RC commanders concentrate their limited time on the most critical wartime training requirements.

RC units often operate under two chains of command—wartime and peacetime. The wartime chain of command provides wartime mission guidance through the CAPSTONE alignment program and approves RC unit METL. Recognizing the limited training time available to RC units during peacetime, wartime commanders assign missions that are as specific as possible. Mission specificity limits the range of possible RC mission essential tasks and allows the RC to achieve Army standards on each training task. The peacetime chain of command also reviews and coordinates

RC METLs. Peacetime commanders provide the training resources and ensure that training for mission essential tasks is planned, executed, and evaluated. The two chains of command work together and remain coordinated by focusing on the METL.

TDA METL DEVELOPMENT

The concept of battle focus is equally applicable to the diverse environment of TDA organizations. Senior leaders in TDA organizations derive mission essential task lists from critical peacetime or wartime missions. Mission essential tasks may be either critical training tasks or operational activities required to accomplish the TDA organization's ongoing mission. An example of a TDA organization METL is at Figure 2-5.

EXAMPLE OF TDA ORGANIZATIONAL METL— TRADOC SCHOOL MISSION ESSENTIAL TASK LIST

- Develop and issue branch doctrine for the force
- Educate and train soldiers and leaders to understand and fight using Army doctrine, tactics, and techniques
- Train soldiers and leaders how to train to fight using Army doctrine, tactics, and techniques
- Develop the proponent force

Figure 2-5.

Training Objectives

After mission essential tasks have been identified, commanders establish supporting standards and conditions for each task. The resulting training objective—a set of conditions and standards that relate to a task—provides a clear statement of expected training performance. The conditions and standards for many major collective training tasks are identified in applicable MTPs. An example of a division-level training objective is at Figure 2-6.

The following are documents that will assist commanders and staffs in developing collective and individual training objectives:

- Mission training plans.
- Soldier's manuals.
- DA Pam 350-38, Standards in Weapons Training.
- Deployment or mobilization plans.
- General defense plans.
- Army, major Army command (MACOM), and local regulations.
- Local standing operating procedures (SOPs).

EXAMPLE TRAINING OBJECTIVE FOR A MISSION ESSENTIAL TASK

MISSION ESSENTIAL TASK:	Move to Assembly Area (AA) and assemble the force.
CONDITION:	Divisional units have conducted the POMCUS draw (72 hours) and prepare to move forward (road/rail) to AA. Equipment shipped has arrived in SPOE and must be moved to AAs. Personnel traveling by air have arrived in theater.
STANDARDS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Division units prepare and submit to MACG movement representative all required movement documents. 2. Divisional units prepare all equipment for road/rail movement in accordance with established procedures. 3. Rail-loaded equipment is completely uploaded according to established procedures and time tables. 4. All convoys are organized and marked according to established procedures. 5. All divisional units move forward to AA according to established movement directives, meet Start Point and Release Point times, travel on designated routes only, and assemble as directed. 6. All convoy commanders maintain control of their convoys and maintain capability to divert convoys to alternate routes while in transit. 7. 100 percent of required reports must be submitted to higher headquarters. 8. 100 percent of the Division's personnel and equipment are moved to assigned AA/SA and assembled under Division or higher headquarters control IAW assigned theater time schedules.

Figure 2-6.

Battle Tasks

After review and approval of subordinate organizations' METLs, the senior leader selects battle tasks. A battle task is a command group, staff, or subordinate organization mission essential task that is so critical that its accomplishment will determine the success of the next higher organization's mission essential task. Battle tasks are selected for each mission essential task on the METL. Battle tasks allow the senior

commander to define the training tasks that—

- Integrate the battlefield operating systems.
- Receive the highest priority for resources such as ammunition, training areas and facilities, materiel, and funds.
- Receive emphasis during evaluations directed by the senior headquarters.

An example of a division commander's list of battle tasks that support the division

mission essential task "conduct a hasty attack" is at Figure 2-7.

EXAMPLE LIST OF DIVISION BATTLE TASKS THAT SUPPORT A MISSION ESSENTIAL TASK

Corps Mission Essential Task: Conduct deep operations
Division Mission Essential Task: Conduct a hasty attack

BATTLE TASK	UNIT FROM WHICH TASK WAS SELECTED	BATTLEFIELD OPERATING SYSTEM
Conduct a hasty attack	1st, 2d, 3d Brigade	Maneuver
Conduct combat aviation operations	Avn Bde	Maneuver
Plan, coordinate, and integrate indirect fire support	DIVARTY	Fire Support
Conduct reconnaissance and security operations	CAV Sqdn	Intelligence
Conduct deep reconnaissance and electronic warfare operations	CEWI Bn	Intelligence
Provide air defense to the division	ADA Bn	Air Defense
Conduct engineer mobility operations	Engr Bn	Mobility/Survivability
Command and control division operations	Cmd Gp	Command and Control
Establish the division command, control, and communications system	Sig Bn	Command and Control
Synchronize tactical operations	G3	Command and Control
Provide combat service support to sustain the division	DISCOM	CSS

Figure 2-7.

Using a corps as an example, Figure 2-8 depicts the relationships between wartime missions, mission essential task list, and battle tasks. This diagram illustrates how

battle focus provides a common direction for the entire organization and the foundation for the subsequent development of relevant training plans.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MISSIONS, METL, AND BATTLE TASKS

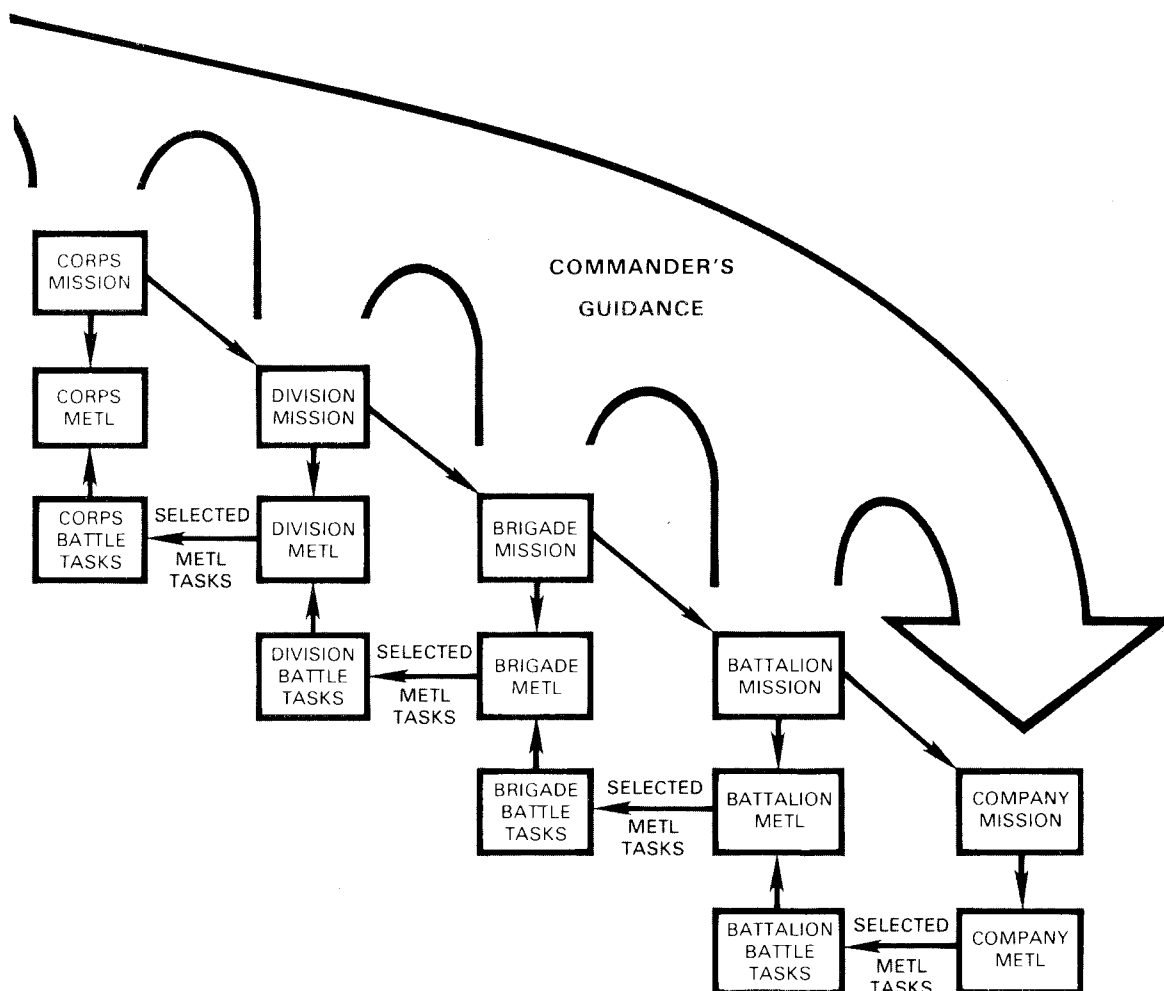


Figure 2-8